

The Council Bluffs Metro Area has organized a Freeway Incident Management Group consisting of representatives from the IDOT, City of Council Bluffs Public Works, Council Bluffs Police Department, Iowa State Patrol, Council Bluffs Fire Department, Pottawattamie County Emergency Management, Pottawattamie Roads, Metropolitan Planning Agency, 911 Communications and other local agencies.

The group has been in existence for several years but became much more structured in 2000 after a series of major incidents in 1999 took place on the Interstate 29/80 roadway system in Council Bluffs. Several interstate roadway maintenance projects restricted traffic lanes and incidents did occur during this time period. A couple of the incidents totally shut down the interstate where traffic was rerouted through Council Bluffs. This additional traffic caused havoc with the local street systems and caused traffic gridlock in some areas. The members of the group quickly realized that better organization was needed in order to handle interstate incidents in Council Bluffs.

SWIFT consists of four teams, plus a team of team leaders, for a total of five different teams. The teams consist of four to eight members with two members being team leaders. The four different teams are: Incident Planning & Logistics, Incident Response, Incident Review, and the Funding & Development. The entire group is headed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency.

SWIFT is currently looking into having a consulting group develop an incident management plan as this can become a very complex task. This will be especially important to the Council Bluffs area as reconstruction for certain portions of the interstate system starts in 2002.

SWIFT is not limited to Council Bluffs. There are incidents on the interstate system which happen outside of Council Bluffs, but still require the Council Bluffs' HAZMAT team, Pottawattamie County Emergency Management personnel, local IDOT personnel and the Iowa State Patrol. An example of an incident like this is a semi which went off the freeway into a ravine near Avoca. The semi was carrying chemicals and traffic had to be rerouted from the area.

By being involved and reviewing each of these incidents, SWIFT gains in understanding on how to best handle the next incident through better communication, establishment of command posts, quicker response times when clearing incidents and how to handle the motoring public while an event is taking place.

Even in its brief existence, the SWIFT has learned a number of things which are required to make an incident management team work. The most critical factor is that everyone "buy into" the group and be committed to making it work. Good leadership is also critical as without leadership, it becomes difficult to stay focused and work towards a common goal as an incident management team.

SWIFT is currently involved in selecting locations and developing protocols for use of three new dynamic message signs which will be placed on I-29 and I-80. The three locations include a message sign for westbound traffic on I-80 in the Minden area, a location south of Council Bluffs on I-29 for northbound traffic near the Hwy 370 exit and one message sign for southbound traffic on I-29 north of the Crescent exit.

What is SWIFT?



The Council Bluffs Metro Area has organized a Freeway Incident Management Group consisting of representatives from the IDOT, City of Council Bluffs Public Works, Council Bluffs Police Department, Iowa State Patrol, Council Bluffs Fire Department, Pottawattamie County Emergency Management, Pottawattamie Roads, Metropolitan Planning Agency, 911 Communications and other local agencies.

The group has been in existence for several years but became much more structured in 2000 after a series of major incidents in 1999 took place on the Interstate 29/80 roadway system in Council Bluffs. Several interstate roadway maintenance projects restricted traffic lanes and incidents did occur during this time period. A couple of the incidents totally shut down the

interstate where traffic was rerouted through Council Bluffs. This additional traffic caused havoc with the local street systems and caused traffic gridlock in some areas. The members of the group quickly realized that better organization was needed in order to handle interstate incidents in Council Bluffs.

SWIFT consists of four teams, plus a team of team leaders, for a total of five different teams. The teams consist of four to eight members with two members being team leaders. The four different teams are: Incident Planning & Logistics , Incident Response, Incident Review, and the Funding & Development. The entire group is headed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency.

SWIFT is currently looking into having a consulting group develop an incident management plan as this can become a very complex task. This will be especially important to the Council Bluffs area as reconstruction for certain portions of the interstate system starts in 2002.

SWIFT is not limited to Council Bluffs. There are incidents on the interstate system which happen outside of Council Bluffs, but still require the Council Bluffs' HAZMAT team, Pottawattamie County Emergency Management personnel, local IDOT personnel and the Iowa State Patrol. An example of an incident like this is a semi which went off the freeway into a ravine near Avoca. The semi was carrying chemicals and traffic had to be rerouted from the area.

By being involved and reviewing each of these incidents, SWIFT gains in understanding on how to best handle the next incident through better communication, establishment of command posts, quicker response times when clearing incidents and how to handle the motoring public while an event is taking place.

Even in its brief existence, the SWIFT has learned a number of things which are required to make an incident management team work. The most critical factor is that everyone "buy into" the group and be committed to making it work. Good leadership is also critical as without leadership, it becomes difficult to stay focused and work towards a common goal as an incident management team.

SWIFT is currently involved in selecting locations and developing protocols for use of three new dynamic message signs which will be placed on I-29 and I-80. The three locations include a message sign for westbound traffic on I-80 in the Minden area, a location south of

Council Bluffs on I-29 for northbound traffic near the Hwy 370 exit and one message sign for southbound traffic on I-29 north of the Crescent exit.

2003 Meeting Dates

Date	Meeting Type & Location
January 9	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
February 13	Team Leader meeting.
March 13	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
April 10	Team Leader meeting.
May 8	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
June 12	SWIFT Team meeting.
July 10	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
August 14	SWIFT Team meeting.
September 11	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
October 9	SWIFT Team meeting.
November 13	Full group meeting 9:00 at Council Bluffs IDOT office.
December 11	SWIFT Team meeting.

SWIFT Team Structure

Team 1. Incident Planning & Logistics Team	Team 2. Incident Response Team
Leaders: Jeff Krist, Tracey Roberts	Leaders: Terry Hummel
Greg Reeder	Mike Metzger
Dick Moraine*	John Reynolds
Blake Redfield*	Hershel Wilber
Jerry Hare	Brad Nocita
Marshall Wilber	Chris Moore
	Rex Allen
Team 3. Incident Review Team	Team 4. Funding & Development Team

Leaders: Dick Moraine*, Blake Redfield*	Leaders: Greg Reeder, Paul Mullen*
Scott Suhr	Orest Lechnowsky
Larry Christiansen	Jim Bane
Dick Mattox	Jim Whetstone
Charlie Pattee	

* Denote Co-Chairman